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ABSTRACT

This study examined how recent federal, state, and district policies shape the design and implementation of schoolwide programs for Title I students in the Chicago Public Schools (Illinois). Four inner city elementary schools were selected for the study. Two had academic outcomes higher than expected, and the other two had lower academic outcomes than expected. A comparative case study method was used to study how the schools designed and implemented schoolwide Title I projects, how state and district reform affected the implementation of the Title I programs, and how standards were being implemented in schools with schoolwide projects. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with principals, teachers, Title I coordinators, and teaching assistants. In Chicago, schoolwide Title I programs were scarcely distinguishable from the regular instructional program. Schools in Chicago no longer identify Title I students or pull them out of the regular classroom for instruction. By allocating additional funding to schools with high concentrations of poor students, schools are able to design programs that address the special needs of these students. Schoolwide programs increased the flexibility schools had to design programs that reduce curricular and instructional fragmentation. However, schools differed in how they allocated Title I resources. Study findings show that the policy environment in which schools operate influences how they design and implement their Title I schoolwide programs. (Contains 3 tables and 14 references.) (SLD)

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Implementing Title I Schoolwide Projects in a Complex Policy Environment: Integrating Standards and School Reform in the Chicago Public Schools

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Since its inception as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965, Title I has provided supplementary resources to schools with a high number of low-income students. Title I funding to schools traditionally consisted of targeted assistance or "pull-out" programs which provided assistance exclusively to students from families whose incomes were below a certain level. In response to concerns that these programs were fragmented and ineffectual (see Kirst, 1988), Congress passed the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments to Chapter I (now Title I) in 1988. These amendments encouraged schools to develop schoolwide projects that would benefit entire student populations in schools where at least 75 percent of the students came from low-income backgrounds.

By the 1990s, "systemic reform" emerged as a major national policy objective (O'Day & Smith, 1993). This national effort included several goals. Improving the academic achievement of low performing students remained a priority. In addition, policy increasingly focused on enhancing the organizational capacity of schools serving high concentrations of low income students. The aim was to assist schools develop comprehensive educational programs and increase instructional coordination. With the passage of the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), federal policy mandates that rigorous national standards be applied to all students, including those receiving Title I services. To meet the new policy challenge, states and districts were required to develop

content and performance standards that are applied to all students. In addition, the legislation expanded the number of Title I schoolwide projects by lowering the eligibility threshold to include schools with 50 percent low-income students.

At the same time, many states and districts adopted policies aimed at improving the educational program in schools with high concentrations of students with economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. These policies included efforts to decentralize decision making to the school site on the one hand and increasing accountability through a focus on academic achievement on the other. For example, Illinois adopted legislation in 1988 that created Local School Councils at each of the schools in Chicago and enhanced the decision making authority of the principal. By 1995, dissatisfaction with the lack of academic improvement in the Chicago schools led to new legislation that recentralized school governance and placed a renewed emphasis on accountability. Two other states, Ohio and Michigan, have also taken steps to increase accountability. The Ohio legislature recently passed legislation patterned on the Chicago model that empowered the mayor of Cleveland to appoint the top administration and school board. Michigan has proposed taking over failing school districts and authorizing intervention by the state school board.

The complexity of this policy environment creates new challenges and opportunities for schools in high poverty areas as they design and implement Title I schoolwide programs. The implementation of schoolwide programs is likely to be influenced as much by state and district policies as the federal Title I legislation. This raises several important questions. How do the state and district policies facilitate the implementation of schoolwide programs in urban areas? Do these new policies help

schools reduce curricular and instructional fragmentation? How do schools incorporate the federally mandated standards into their curriculum and adapt their instructional practices to insure all students are meeting them?

Research on the implementation of Title I schoolwide projects and resource utilization suggest that schoolwide programs have made important gains in reducing curricular and instructional fragmentation. Surveys of Title I schoolwide projects reveal that the greater flexibility allowed schoolwide programs increased cooperation and coordination across categorical programs (Schenck & Beckstrom, 1993) and reduced the fragmentation that accompanied categorical Title I programs (Wong, Hedges, Borman, & D'Agostino, 1996). Increased curricular integration and reduced instructional fragmentation, the use of assessments that informed teachers of individual student achievement, teachers' knowledge of student progress, and additional instruction on specific skills contributed to improving student learning (Wong, Sunderman, and Lee, 1997; Millsap, Turnbull, Moss, Birgham, Gamse, & Marks, 1992; Stringfield, Billig, & Davis, 1991). At the same, the broader institutional arrangements that schools operate in continue to influence the design and implementation of schoolwide programs. For example, in a comparative case study of schoolwide programs in Minneapolis and Houston, district level policies were found to shape the design and implementation of schoolwide programs (Wong, Sunderman, & Lee, 1997). Other researchers found that the overall quality of the district was more important than programmatic components in determining the quality of Title I programs (Millsap et al., 1992).

In light of these findings, this study examines how recent federal, state, and district policies shape the design and implementation of schoolwide programs for Title I

students in one urban district, Chicago. First, it pays particular attention to state and district school reform policies intended to improve poorly performing schools. These policies are likely to shape the organization and administration of schoolwide programs for Title I students. In 1988, the state adopted legislation that decentralized school governance. This law strengthened the role of the schools in decision making, gave them greater control over the budget, and enhanced the authority of the principal. In 1995, the legislature amended this legislation because of the continuing poor academic performance of students in the Chicago schools. The new legislation incorporated a focus on academic accountability and recentralized many of the governance functions of the system. To meet these challenges, the district adopted a number of policies aimed at the lowest performing schools.

Second, it considers how the application of standards to all students contributes to increasing curricular and instructional integration. The 1994 *Improving America's Schools Act* mandates that rigorous national standards be applied to all students, including those receiving Title I services. To comply with this mandate, both the state and district have adopted academic standards in core subject areas for all grades. The district standards,[1] adopted in May 1997, are linked to the State Goals for Learning adopted in 1996. Since student performance is uneven among schoolwide projects, high standards are likely to have differential consequences on how schools organize classrooms for instruction.

Research Design

To identify schools in Chicago for participation in the study, a regression analysis was used that examined the relationship between measures of student achievement in reading and math and socio-economic characteristics.[2] Four inner city elementary schools that showed differences in student outcomes were selected. Two of the schools had student outcomes that were higher than expected, and two had outcomes that were lower than expected, when social and demographic characteristics of the schools were controlled. A comparative case study methodology was used to examine (1) how schools design and implement Title I schoolwide projects, (2) how state and district school reform policies affect the implementation of Title I schoolwide projects, and (3) how standards are implemented in schools with schoolwide programs. School visits, staff interviews, and classroom observations were conducted in the four schools in the spring and fall of 1997 and documentary materials collected. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with principals, teachers, Title I coordinators, and teaching assistants to determine how policy changes affected the organization of Title I schoolwide projects. These interviews focused on resource allocation, school vision, content and performance standards, curriculum and instructional practices, professional support to teachers, and community

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[1] Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. (1997). *Expecting More: Higher Standards for Chicago's Students.* Chicago: The Board of Education of the City of Chicago.

[2] The socio-economic variables include percent of students who qualified for free or reduced price lunch, the stability of the student population over the academic year, the percent of students who were African American, Latino, Asian or American Indian, the percent of students with limited English proficiency, the average daily attendance, the size of the school, and whether or not the school had a special program designation, such as magnet school. Achievement scores were collected for seven years, 1990 to 1996. See

involvement. Documentary materials included the school improvement plan, school budget, personnel allocation, Title I program and budget information, and corrective action plans.

In addition, district and regional Title I administrators were interviewed and documentary materials collected from the central administration. These interviews focused on the history of the Title I schoolwide program, how resources are used to support the schools, and the kinds of support (curriculum, instructional, assessment, and professional development) provided to the schools. Documentary materials included Title I policy guidelines, district reform policies, demographic information, and school level achievement test scores.

In the following section, we describe the Title I schoolwide program in four Chicago public schools. The second section examines the impact of state and district policies on schoolwide Title I programs. We examine how recent reform policies enhance instructional integration for students in high poverty schools or contribute to sustaining instructional fragmentation. The third section examines how standards affect the design and implementation of the schoolwide program. We pay particular attention to whether standards facilitate curricular integration and how they impact teaching practice.

Implementing Title I Schoolwide Projects in the Chicago District

Of the 550 public schools in Chicago, 430 are eligible for Title I assistance and 262 have schoolwide programs. Using a multiple regression analysis, we identified four

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William L. Yancey and Raj Thadani, 1997, "Identifying Exceptional Schools: Chicago, Illinois," for more

schools from this larger pool for participation in this study. This analysis examined the relationship between average levels of achievement and the schools' social and demographic characteristics and designation as magnet schools (see Yancey & Thadani, 1997). Each school received an expected score, that is, the level of achievement that would be expected given the school's socio-economic characteristics. This expected score was then compared to the actual achievement score, indicating whether or not the school is performing above or below expectations.

We started our investigation with four schools, Fairfax, Montgomery, Cornell, and Butler.[3] Fairfax and Montgomery are classified as performing better than expected, whereas Cornell and Butler performed below expectations. Table 1 summarizes expected and actual achievement scores for each of the schools. The four schools are described below in terms of their size and demographic information as well as their use of Title I monies to provide specific programs and create conditions such as small class size which are considered to be conducive to student learning. Demographic characteristics for the schools and district are summarized in table 2, and school budget information in table 3.

Our findings are consistent with previous research (Wong & Sunderman, 1997; Wong, Sunderman, & Lee, 1997). Schools that perform higher than expected organized their Title I program in ways that reduce instructional and curricular fragmentation whereas curricular and instructional fragmentation were likely to persist in low performing schools. Increasing instructional integration means that all students benefit from the same academic expectations. Strategies that insure curriculum and instructional integration include a focus on schoolwide goals that are used to determine how well

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on the methodology and results of the analysis.

students are meeting academic expectations. In addition, schoolwide programs frequently incorporate practices that provide additional instruction for low performing students on the same curriculum they receive in the classroom. These may include computer assisted instruction, extended day programs, summer schools, and individual tutoring or peer instruction. Low performing schools, on the other hand, implemented a variety of programs and strategies that lacked a schoolwide focus. This contributed to maintaining instructional and curricular fragmentation where expectations vary for different groups of students.

Fairfax School

Fairfax Elementary School is a small pre-K through eighth grade school located in one of the poorest areas in the city of Chicago, with 97 percent of its students coming from low-income households. Fairfax has an enrollment of a little more than 400 students, nearly all of whom are African-American (99 percent). Enrollment has declined 27 percent between 1990 and 1996 due to a loss of housing in the area. Attendance at Fairfax is 93 percent. The administration and teaching staff have been quite consistent over the years, although there has been an average student mobility rate of about 50 percent since 1992. Due to its high level of low-income students, Fairfax receives federal and state Title I funds every year.

Fairfax has had a schoolwide project for the past four years. At Fairfax, the combined allocations of federal and state Title I funds comprise 98 percent of the

[1] School names are fictitious.

school's discretionary funds and 25 percent of the total budget. These funds have been applied towards a variety of programs and conditions intended to improve student learning, especially for underachieving students. Some funds were used to hire additional classroom teachers in order to reduce the class size to about 20 students per class. Teaching assistants were also hired to assist in the instructional labs provided for students, and a stipend is given to parents who work in the classrooms. The instructional labs are all computer labs, and focus on math, science, and reading. Some labs are attended by all students, while others target students with extra needs in the core academic areas. Students are drilled on basic skills, and the lab instructor keeps the students on task. Kindergarten and first grade students also participate in the Writing to Read computer program that teaches beginning reading skills based on phonics and writing. The classroom teacher is always present during the computer sessions so that the lab work can be coordinated with the regular class work.

Title I funds are also used for additional instructional time for underachieving students, including an additional hour of school three times a week to focus on reading, math, and test-taking skills. Students were previously selected for this program based on test scores. When the program became schoolwide, the teachers were given authority to choose the students who would participate. There is also a summer school program for underachieving students, funded by Title I and the Board of Education. In addition, the school participates in an integrated arts curriculum provided by C.A.P.E., the Chicago Arts Partnership in Education. Professional artists work with teachers to design and teach the curriculum by combining art with core subject areas. For staff development, teachers have received technology training and a staff development program has been provided

which focuses on assessment and the teaching of reading. The principal, Mr. Bates, said that with staff development he "tries to avoid the authoritarian method at all costs...and [he tries] to get people involved in making decisions [who] are going to be responsible for carrying them out."

Although Fairfax's Title I interventions cannot be empirically linked to increased student achievement, this school has shown many positive results in terms of test scores and attendance. Fairfax School enjoys an eighth grade graduation rate of 100 percent and achievement test scores significantly exceed what would be expected when poverty and other demographic factors are considered. According to the multi-regression analysis procedure described above, the expected average score over the past six years at Fairfax in math was 16.94 while the actual average score was 27.84. In reading, the actual score also exceeded the expected score but only slightly, with a .61 difference.

Montgomery School

Montgomery is a K-5 Chicago school located in Little Village, an area with a large population of Latino families. Ninety-nine percent of the students at Montgomery are Latino, 98.1 percent of whom are classified as low-income. Attendance is high at 94.2 percent. The principal decided to change to a schoolwide program a year ago so that "everyone would just be equal, regardless of how they score on tests, or regardless of whether they are on public aid ... whatever the case may be." Montgomery has participated in Success for All (SFA) for four years, an educational improvement program that is funded in part by Title I monies.

Many of Montgomery's programs are funded by either federal Title I or state Chapter I, or both. For the Success for All intervention, these monies purchase on-site staff training, materials, the training of a Success for All coordinator, and certified tutors to provide one-on-on instruction to low-achieving students. The Success for All coordinator, Ms. Harley, spends 50 percent of her time assisting teachers with the implementation and assessment of the program; the rest of her time is spent managing materials and coordinating this intervention with others in the school. The Success for All program is highly structured and consists of ninety-minute reading blocks with students at similar reading levels as well as other reading activities such as paired reading, reading with parents at home, and one-on-one tutoring. All students are assessed every eight weeks, and the SFA coordinator reorganizes reading groups and individualized instruction accordingly. The goal is to have all students reading at grade level by third grade.

Before the schoolwide program was implemented, Ms. Harley explained, the "middle" children were pulled out for remedial instruction. The classroom teachers were therefore left with the low- and high-achieving students, which made it difficult to do group work and other activities. Since becoming schoolwide, however, an equal number of low, middle, and high students are assigned to each class. When asked about the role of the district, she indicated that the staff at the district are not very supportive. The school occasionally calls the district or region with questions, but these individuals are seen more as enforcers of regulations than as sources of needed assistance.

Montgomery also has an extended day with a voluntary homework program. Students who want extra assistance stay after school for a half an hour to work with the

teaching assistants on their homework. There are also bi- and monolingual computer labs used for reading, math, and the Writing to Read program. These programs are funded by federal Title I and state Chapter 1 funds. The computer lab instructor, Mr. Juarez, described a significant change before and after the school became schoolwide. Initially the computer labs were solely used for groups of low-performing students in a pull-out fashion, where the classroom teacher was not present. Since they became a schoolwide school, he explained, the entire student body has participated in the labs, and the teacher has remained in the lab to help teach small groups and maintain coherence with the regular class curriculum. One fifth grade teacher said she thinks the computers are extremely helpful because they allow the students to work at their own level and pace. Mr. Juarez also has two lab assistants and receives Title I funds to buy computers, software, and spreadsheets for teacher use. Mr. Juarez, as with Ms. Harley, did not perceive the region or district as being a source of assistance.

Another component of the Success for All program is the family support team, comprised of the SFA facilitator, the nurse, the psychologist, the social worker, and the teacher who refers a particular child. This team works with children who have behavioral, family, or other problems. The team contacts the family and brings them in to work with the students and provide positive reinforcement, when possible. There is a School-Community Representative at Montgomery who is responsible for this contact with the families, and makes home visits when necessary. This position has been in place for many years, though, so it is not just a product of the Success for All program. This staff member, as well as the other people interviewed at Montgomery, spoke enthusiastically about becoming a schoolwide Title I school. They were impressed with

the process of aligning various programs with each other and perceived an increased coherence between the staff and the students. In terms of achievement, the students' average math scores were 28.07 compared to the expected average of 21.17. In reading, the expected score of 14.14 was exceeded by 9.13 points, for a score of 23.27.

Cornell School

Cornell School is a K through 8 school located on the west side of Chicago. The student poverty rate is 86.7 percent, and all of the students are African-American. Cornell is one of the 109 Chicago schools that was placed on academic probation this past year. It has been a schoolwide school for two years, has low staff and student mobility, and participates in a variety of programs. Student attendance at Cornell is 91.7 percent. The principal, Mr. Harrison, recalled how the school functioned prior to the schoolwide plan: "Those... who were identified as part of that group [Title I] utilized whatever supplies and equipment that was purchased with that money and they were the only ones. So quite naturally the [other] youngsters saw that and they protested." As with the staff members at Fairfax and Montgomery, the staff at Cornell has been pleased with the increased equity and coherence that has accompanied the schoolwide model.

As part of the academic probation process, Cornell is required to have an "external partner" to assist the school in improving student learning. DePaul University's School Achievement Structure (SAS) program is Cornell's partner. As part of this program, Cornell's staff is involved in peer mentoring and consultants give inservices on specific instructional strategies. Other components include regular classroom

assessments, a focus on discipline, and teacher collaboration on curriculum planning. Cornell is also involved with the Chicago Learning Collaborative, which promotes a "critical learning protocol." This consists of dividing the staff into two groups, an "inner group" that discusses student work and an "outside group" that analyzes what the inner group is doing. The two groups then change roles, allowing each group to have an objective perspective on the work in progress. Two other programs in place at the school are the Chicago Teachers' Union Quest Program, the School Change and Inquiry method, and the Chicago Writing Project. Few details were given about the first two programs, but the latter program is a staff development opportunity that also provides college credit. In terms of parent involvement, there are two programs. In Parents as Teachers First, parent volunteers go to homes of preschool-aged children to assist them with school readiness. Families and Schools Together (FAST) brings in identified families to the school so they can receive training in parenting issues.

Two of the schoolwide changes that school staff members consistently mentioned were an "augmented staffing setting" and a change in how the computer labs are run.[4] The augmented staffing arrangement provides an additional classroom teacher for three classrooms, one in each of grades four, five, and six. The two smaller classes are physically separated so that each class has 14 to 15 students. These smaller classes use the same curriculum as regular classes, but the hope is that the teachers will use more innovative teaching strategies for these at-risk students. The computer labs, previously used exclusively by Title I students, are now used by all students in the school. The computer lab teachers are part of the augmented staffing program, so they have a small

class with them the whole day. They arrange times when the regular classroom teachers can bring their class in to use the computers, if their class is small enough. With the larger classes, the computer teacher and the classroom teacher exchange students. Students work on basic math and language arts skills in the computer lab, and the lab instructor receives input from the classroom teacher on which skills should be taught. The classroom teacher is given the printouts on the students' progress on the skills so that the programs can be altered or accelerated when necessary.

The school also began to focus daily on basic math and reading skills in the classroom since changing to schoolwide status. For a half an hour every morning, all teachers would review computation or vocabulary, alternating each day. Mrs. Barry, the previous Title I coordinator and current disciplinarian, said of the effort: "It really worked for us because it showed up on the scores - kids improved." Cornell students also participate in the "We Deliver" writing program. The school assigns a particular prompt, such as "How do you Choose a Friend?" and the students write letters to each other on the topic. Student volunteers sort and deliver the mail, and the students are enthusiastic about the program. The intent is to increase students' interest in writing by using an inherently fun and interesting activity.

Despite the myriad of programs in place at Cornell, their math and reading scores are below the expected score based on the multiple regression analysis used for this study. In math, the expected score was 22.49 and the actual was 15.57; in reading the expected score was 20.27 and the actual score was 11.87. As with any school, it is difficult to determine the specific causes of high or low achievement. Perhaps with Cornell there are

[4] The program design was in place in spring 1997 when we visited the school. It was changed in the fall of

simply too many programs in place to have an effective, coherent focus on improving student learning.

Butler School

Butler Elementary is located on the near west side of Chicago in a neighborhood that has been undergoing renovation in recent years. Old housing has been cleared and other buildings renovated. A new sports stadium was built in the neighborhood and the area was "spruced up" for the 1996 Democratic convention. This has contributed to declining enrollment at Butler—the school has lost about 175 students between 1990 and 1997, a decline of 29 percent. Nonetheless, the student body remains almost 100 percent low income. All of the students are African American. Butler was placed on probation in October 1996 for poor academic performance.

Butler has had a schoolwide program since 1988. After three years as a pilot schoolwide project, they had to re-organize their program and reapply for schoolwide status. At that time they instituted an augmented staffing model where some classrooms had thirty students and others had fifteen. Currently, the school uses their Title I resources to hire four additional teachers to reduce class size. Most classes now have 23 or fewer students.

In addition, Title I funds support a computer lab that all students attend once a week. The school recently hired a new computer teacher with considerable knowledge and skill in using computers as instructional tools. The computer teacher prepares her own curriculum which she tries to coordinate with classroom activities. Nonetheless,

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1997 to meet the demands of probation. These changes are discussed in the next section.

teachers do not accompany their students to the lab. Students learn key boarding, word processing, how to make charts and graphs, and to use the computer and internet for research. The upper grades are doing research projects and learning how to write persuasive arguments. The primary grades are writing a word book to supplement vocabulary building. The middle grades are also working on a research project using the computer. The lab is also used for skill development in reading, math, and writing, particularly at the primary level. In addition, the school is in the process of networking the classrooms and computer labs. Currently, the labs, library, and resource rooms are networked.

Staff turnover has been high--over half of the staff has been replaced in the last five years. A number of staff members left when the principal changed, others left because of uncertainty over whether the school would remain open, and some staff were lost because of declining enrollment. To upgrade the instructional program, the principal instituted a number of changes. She hired a first grade teacher with a background in Project Read, a K-5 multi-sensory reading program, and trained eight teachers in how to use this program. The school also participates in the Chicago Learning Collaborative, the Chicago Systemic Initiative, and works with an external partner.

In addition, the school has attempted to increase the academic focus of the curriculum. The resource classes (gym, library, art, and computer) were considered free time by the students, and the content was non-academic, focusing, for example, on African culture. The principal replaced art with music and hired new teachers for music, gym, computers, and the library. Each resource class developed a structured program and

held students responsible for completing the work. Students now have requirements or projects they complete for each class, and are graded accordingly.

These changes are in the direction of increasing instructional integration and implementing a more rigorous curriculum, strategies likely to improve student learning. Indeed, the principal reported improvements in math achievement tests in 1996 - 1997, scores not included in our analysis. It is likely academic achievement will continue to improve as these program changes mature.

Recent State Legislation and Changes in District Policy

A number of policies adopted by the state and district are likely to affect how Chicago schools implement Title I schoolwide projects. First, under provisions of the 1988 Chicago School Reform Act, state Chapter 1 funds were allocated directly to the schools based on the number of disadvantaged students enrolled. This allowed schools greater flexibility in determining how the monies should be spent as well as increased the amount of discretionary funds that schools control. Indeed, in one school, state Chapter 1 funds accounted for almost 98 percent of the school's discretionary funds and 25 percent of the total school budget. The allocation of state Chapter 1 funds directly to eligible schools also changed the relationship between the district and the school, since the school had the authority to use state Chapter 1 funds as they saw fit with little oversight authority from the central office.

The role of the schools was also strengthened by other changes in the 1988 law that decentralized the system and encouraged greater control at the local school level.

The law established elected Local School Councils, comprised primarily of parents and community members, that had the power to hire and fire the principal and approve the budget and School Improvement Plan (SIP). Principals were given increased authority over the school budget, personnel, and the development of the SIP, and were made accountable to the Local School Councils. These changes had consequences for how the central office provided support services to the schools. The role of the central office changed from one of providing direct service in curriculum and instruction to managerial and procedural functions (Wong & Sunderman, 1996). For Title I services this meant a focus on leadership development and planning that included in-services on planning for a schoolwide project, dissemination of information, assistance with the application process, and monitoring for compliance with program guidelines.

In 1995, the state legislature passed the Chicago School Reform Amendatory Act which redesigned how the district was governed (Wong, et al., 1997). Provisions of this law expanded the financial authorities of the board and strengthened and centralized the administration by linking the CPS administration to the school board and the mayor. The 1995 law also incorporated a focus on accountability and academic achievement that enhanced the powers of the CEO to identify poorly performing schools and place these schools on remediation, probation, intervention, or reconstitution. This meant that district policy focused on the lowest performing schools within the system. By the 1997-98 school year, 109 schools out of 557 were on probation for poor academic performance. Another eight schools were recommended for reconstitution in June 1997. Schools placed on probation or reconstituted were paired with an "external partner" contracted to provide educational services to assist schools improve.

Notwithstanding the district focus on low performing schools, there was little effort by the central office to integrate the intervention program and the Title I program, with each program implemented in very different ways. As one Title I coordinator in the regional office explained, ". . . the probation teams that are going out are more or less directing schools in terms of what programs they should have. We are not into that arena of telling schools what they should do or not do." The independence of the two intervention programs also makes it difficult at the school level to design schoolwide programs that are integrated across the school. School administrators were as likely to change Title I schoolwide projects to meet the demands of probation (that is, adopting strategies to get off probation as quickly as possible) than in ways that would increase program coherence.

To demonstrate a commitment to efficient management, the new administration reorganized and downsized the central office. Eleven district offices were replaced with six regional offices and Title I managers and coordinators were shifted to the regional offices. Interviews with those directing and managing Title I services at the district and regional offices in Chicago revealed specifics about the impact of this reorganization on Title I programs and services. We interviewed two central office people and coordinators in three different regions to obtain more information about their roles in providing services to Title I schools. One administrator who remained in the central office, Mr. Carlson[5], expressed frustration with the decision to move the majority of Title I staff members to the regional offices. He said that the major problem with this decision was that the regional coordinators were now responsible for many things not related to Title I.

[5] The names of individuals and schools are pseudonyms.

One regional coordinator commented that moving from the central office to the region completely changed her position. Before the move they provided assistance to various regions' staff, processed schools' applications for programs, and completed all the documents that were used. This past year they have been working directly with schools, ensuring that the schools' Title I programs are within the guidelines. Schools receive a guidebook that assists them with selecting and developing programs such as reading interventions or professional development conferences. The regional coordinators usually work with the principal or a lead teacher, and they are well received by the schools. There is no formal communication between regions, though, and the regional coordinators only communicate with Mr. Carlson at the central office. Schools concurred that assistance from the regional office focused primarily on administration of the Title I schoolwide program.

The other central office person we spoke with, Mr. Thomas, is responsible for "program improvement" in the schools. At first he worked solely with Title I schools, but he later assumed school improvement responsibilities for all schools. There are certain programs offered through the district for staff members in Title I schools, but no distinction is made between programs for regular or schoolwide schools. There are several training programs formed in partnership with universities to provide degrees in curriculum and instruction that include a focus on program improvement for those working in Title I schools. These degree programs were in place before the change in administration in 1995, so these efforts are independent of that legislation. Title I funds are also used to hire university professors to provide technical assistance and teacher training to Title I schools.

Schools on Probation: Two schools that we visited, Cornell and Butler, are on probation. Cornell was placed on probation in January 1997 and was on the state Watch List prior to that. Butler was placed on probation in October 1996. Academic performance at both schools is low, with fewer than 15 percent of the students scoring at or above the national norms on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS).

At the school level, both federal Title I and state Chapter 1 funds are frequently used to meet the costs probation services. As part of probation, schools are required to work with an "external partner," an organization or agency chosen by the school that provides educational support services. During the first year of probation, the board pays all of the costs associated with the required services. The school pays an increasing proportion of the costs in subsequent years until they have assumed the full cost or been taken off probation. Butler, for example, used a combination of federal Title I and state Chapter 1 funds to meet the 50% requirement during the second year of probation. According to the principal, about $30,000 was allocated for staff development activities to cover the cost of the external partner.

Being on probation is just as likely to increase instructional fragmentation as it is to promote integration, as illustrated in the schools we visited. Cornell reorganized their Title I schoolwide program and adopted a number of strategies intended to get them off probation as quickly as possible. The school eliminated the augmented staffing arrangement and used Title I schoolwide money to reduce class size across the board. This came at the expense of maintaining resource teachers in the three computer labs. According to the principal, the school realized the labs were not working well because there was not necessarily any coordination between what was happening in the lab and

classroom instruction. Nonetheless, because of the huge investment in computers, the school felt obligated to continue the lab structure. This changed in the fall of 1997 when funds were re-allocated to add three additional teaching positions to further reduce class size across the board. The computer labs were dismantled and moved to the classrooms. The school made other staff changes that included assigning the strongest teachers to the benchmark grades.

In addition, the school targeted 10 students in each classroom that were at or above the national norms for improvement. They used standardized test scores to identify these students. According to the principal, "If we closely monitor their progress and the instruction they receive, if those ten youngsters live up to their potential and beyond, then we could deal with that systematically imposed get off probation situation."[6]

Probation has reinforced the school's programmatic approach to curriculum and instruction. None of the programs in place were eliminated and additional requirements were added as a result of the school's probation status. For example, teachers now participate in workshops sponsored by the district called Saturday Academies and they work with an external partner to improve classroom instruction. One of the goals of the external partnership is to help the school develop a schoolwide instructional focus. It is too early to determine if this is being accomplished. While the principal views these programs as all working towards the goal of increasing teacher collaboration and continuity, he admitted that the staff has a limited understanding of the relationship between the programs.[7]

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[6] Principal interview, Cornell Elementary, December 2, 1997.
[7] Principal interview, Cornell Elementary, May 22, 1997.

As already noted, Butler has made a number of changes to upgrade their instructional program and improve the academic focus of the school. Some of these came as a result of probation. For example, the board's probation report confirmed that the resource classes were considered free time, making it easier for the principal to institute changes in these programs. Being on probation helped solidify efforts within the school to create school teams and get teachers to collaborate at grade level. It also created a sense of urgency among teachers to work together to get off probation. The program provided by the external partner also focuses on improving the academic program. Notwithstanding these efforts at curriculum integration, teachers at Butler also participate in a number of programs as a requirement of probation. For example, they attend a number of workshops sponsored by the board and participate in the summer bridge program.

The new central office policies have affected schools not on probation as well. Students in the benchmark grades of 3, 6, and 8 must attend summer school if they do not achieve a particular score on the ITBS. After summer school, called the summer bridge program, students still performing below expectations are retained. Schools share the cost of the summer school program with the central office. Retention also affects classroom assignments and instruction. For example, Fairfax retained 26 third graders for failing to make sufficient improvement in the summer bridge program. Because of this high retention rate, the school had only one fourth grade. Many of these third graders were placed in one classroom where they received the same curriculum as the previous year.

Perhaps the most notable consequence of these central office policies is the increased focus on improving standardized achievement test scores. All the schools we visited pay increasing attention to test preparation, particularly in the few weeks before the administration of the tests. Many of them use district or state prepared test preparation materials and attend workshops sponsored by the district on test taking skills. Teachers are also likely to adopt instructional strategies that focus on remediation and basic skills because they believe this will help students do well on the tests.

Integrating Standards into Title I Schoolwide Programs

To comply with Illinois Public Law 88-686, passed in August 1996, the Chicago Public Schools developed the Chicago Academic Standards (CAS) and Curriculum Framework Statements (CFS).[8] These define "what students should know and be able to do"[9] in four core curriculum areas--Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. These local learning objectives must meet or exceed the goals established by the State Board of Education.[10] The Chicago standards and curriculum frameworks are "designed for all students, including special needs students and those with limited English proficiency."[11] They leave it up to the schools and individual teachers to adjust and adapt the instructional materials to meet the needs of the students being served. CPS identified grades 3, 6, 8, 10, and 12 as the benchmark grades for reporting progress to the public.

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[8] Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. (1997). *Expecting More: Higher Standards for Chicago's Students, Chicago Academic Standards and Frameworks.* Chicago: The Board of Education of the City of Chicago.
[9] Ibid.
[10] *The School Code of Illinois* (1996). Chapter 105, Article 2-3.63.
[11] Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. (1997).

Schools began implementing the current standards during the 1996-97 school year. Currently, schools are assessed on the Illinois Goals Assessment Program (IGAP), a state administered test, and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). The central office administration is developing an assessment that is aligned with the standards.

A primary objective of curriculum standards is the opportunity they provide for schools to develop consistent and uniform curriculum goals for all students (Wong & Sunderman, 1997; O'Day & Smith, 1993). The expectation is that this should improve the performance of all students, including Title I students. According to advocates of systemic reform, curriculum frameworks are intended to provide direction and vision that will lead to an improvement in curriculum content and instruction (O'Day & Smith, 1993). The goal is a structure where curriculum and assessment are aligned and state and district policies would support reform at the school level. Nonetheless, by tying the standards to outcome measures, schools are just as likely to adopt short term strategies as the more comprehensive changes reformers desire. In Chicago, there are predictable consequences for poor performance. Schools are placed on a statewide Academic Watch list for not performing well on the IGAP, and schools are subject to academic probation or reconstitution by the district for poor performance on the ITBS.

Many principals and teachers were unconvinced the present standards and curriculum frameworks provided anything new. "I think we just put a different name on the same things. What we used to call outcomes is what we are talking about with the Chicago framework."[12] Others expressed the view that the current standards and frameworks were more comprehensive than what they've had in the past. As one teacher

[12] Principal interview, Fairfax Elementary School, October 9, 1997.

put it, "the standards are the most organized I have ever seen them."[13] Indeed, CPS provides a manual to serve as a guidebook in implementing and using the standards. It outlines the state goal, the district's academic standard, and the curriculum for a given academic area. The guidebook is intended to tell teachers what is appropriate to teach at each grade level. Many felt that aligning the district's academic standards with the state goals made them easier to use because they "all are headed the same way."[14]

In this section, we examine how schools with Title I schoolwide projects implement the curriculum goals and integrate them into their ongoing schoolwide program. Keeping in mind the goal of increasing curricular and instructional integration, we paid attention to (1) teacher collaboration, (2) instructional pacing, and (3) students not meeting the standards. Teachers may collaborate as a strategy to align the curriculum with the standards, thereby increasing curricular coherence within and across grades. Teachers may also vary the instructional pacing, that is, the amount and difficulty of curricular material actually covered in a given period of time, to insure they cover any given standard. At the same time, teachers must pay attention to students who are not meeting the standards. This may require changes in instructional strategies and other practices to insure all students meet the higher standards.

Increasing Teacher Collaboration: To implement the standards and curriculum frameworks, schools must determine if their curriculum is aligned with the standards. At each grade level, and for each subject, teachers must review their curriculum, textbooks, and other instructional materials to determine which fit a particular goal and where they are missing appropriate materials. Since aligning the standards with the school

[13] Teacher interview, 5th grade teacher, Butler Elementary, November 13, 1997.

curriculum can be a daunting job, some schools in Chicago hire a consulting firm that does it for them via computer.

To align the curriculum with the standards, teachers at each of the four schools met in grade level meetings and reviewed the goals and their curriculum. Nonetheless, there were differences between schools in the extent of teacher collaboration. Teachers at Fairfax used grade group meetings to coordinate what was taught at a particular grade level, and met with other grades to learn how to build on what was taught in other grades. Fairfax teachers are also paying attention to pacing as a way to meet the standards. They meet monthly in grade group meetings to review the standards, outline the goals they want to accomplish, and review their progress. According to the principal, "Some were staying on the same standard too long."[15]

Butler encourages teachers to plan lessons together at each grade level as a way to incorporate the standards into the curriculum. While teaming has been in place for a number of years, it was not widely practiced until recently. As part of changes the school implemented as a condition of probation, the principal restructured the class schedule to make common planning periods more feasible. This was also facilitated by a reduction in the number of classrooms due to declining enrollment. Nonetheless, teaming is still a weakly developed structure. One fourth grade teacher reported that teachers were "too stressed and burnt out" to hold regular grade level meetings. Instead, they have "mini meetings" in the hallway.[16] Much of the work of adapting the standards is left to individual teachers as they develop their lesson plans.

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[14] Principal interview, Cornell Elementary School, May 22, 1997.
[15] Principal interview, Fairfax, October 9, 1997.
[16] Teacher interview, 4th/5th grade teacher, Butler, November 14, 1997.

Cornell used grade level team meetings to prepare "instructional overlays" that identify skills and objectives based on the Chicago learning standards and the ITBS. This strategy was introduced by the school's external partner and links lesson planning with skills on the ITBS. It was extended to include the Chicago learning standards. Teachers develop an overlay that focuses on the skills to be covered in a five week period. At the end of a five week period, students are assessed to determine which skills they mastered. Those who did not master the skills are regrouped within the classroom. Teachers are expected to provide those students with remediation while continuing to teach the next set of skills.

While teacher collaboration is an important strategy for aligning the curriculum with standards, standards were not a major impetus for reorganizing schoolwide programs. Two schools relied on structures already in place. Collaboration at Fairfax existed prior to the introduction of the current standards. Montgomery, which also used grade group meetings to align the curriculum with the standards, did not make any significant changes. They already had grade group meetings in place as well as subject matter teams. This structure was put in place with the introduction of the schoolwide program and the adoption of SFA program. At both Butler and Cornell, collaboration was introduced as part of the probation plan.

Instructional pacing and the integration of standards: Curriculum standards may influence learning by changing the instructional pacing, that is the amount of curricular material actually covered in a given period of time. One teacher commented that the standards "keeps you focused and it keeps you with a goal. You know exactly what you

must touch upon."[17] Another said the standards "let me know what they should have learned before and what they should get now."[18] A veteran fourth grade teacher found that following the standards meant implementing a more demanding curriculum (amount and quality of the curriculum) than what she had previously used.

One teacher found the standards helpful in the content areas, such as science, social studies, and math, because the school had materials that correlated with the standards.[19] He had more problems meeting the standards in reading because of the range of reading abilities in his classroom. To compensated for the different reading abilities, he would have students read a few sections out loud, have the class read a passage together, and then have students read silently.

In other instances, the differences in aptitudes of students and instructional groups determined content coverage (Barr and Dreeben, 1983). This was particularly evident at Cornell, where teachers developed different lesson plans for students mastering different skills. One teacher, for example, found the structure put in place by the external partner required she develop three lesson plans--one for those not meeting the objectives, one for those meeting the objectives, and one for those that exceeded the objectives for the five week period.

Addressing the needs of students not meeting the standards: "The state standards are great if the kids are at grade level. If the kids aren't at grade level, they aren't very helpful . . . they are so far behind that they are at the first and second grade reading levels

[17] Teacher Interview, 7th grade teacher, Fairfax Elementary School, October 9, 1997.
[18] Teacher interview, 4th/5th grade teacher, Butler, November 14, 1997.
[19] Teacher interview,5th grade teacher, Butler Elementary, November 13, 1997.

and I have to go back and say the standards aren't really fair."[20] Indeed, establishing standards does not insure that all students are at the same place or learn at the same rate. Schools that were most successful with these students already had programs in place to provide additional instruction to low performing students. For example, Fairfax has an after school reading program for students falling behind and uses the computer lab to provide additional instruction on basic skills. The SFA program at Montgomery provides individual tutoring to insure that low performing students receive additional instruction in reading.

Because students have different abilities, teachers are likely to adopt different kinds of instructional arrangements. If the same standards are applied to all students, regardless of their individual differences, teachers are likely to adopt different instructional strategies to adapt to these differences. For example, teachers at Fairfax used whole group teaching and addressed the needs of low performing students with peer tutoring, individual tutoring, and, in come cases, cooperative learning. The computer lab was used to provide additional instruction on basic skills. Teachers at Cornell, on the other hand, were more concerned with remediation, and prepared different lessons for students at different levels.

Conclusions and Implications

Title I schoolwide programs are hardly distinguishable from the regular instructional program. Schools in Chicago no longer identify Title I students or pull them

[20] Teacher interview, 5th grade teacher, Butler Elementary, November 13, 1997.

out of the regular classroom for instruction. By allocating additional funding to schools with high concentrations of poor students, schools are able to design programs that address the special needs of these students. Additionally, schoolwide programs increase the flexibility schools have to design programs that reduce curricular and instructional fragmentation. Still, schools differ in how they allocate Title I resources and design their program. While the goal of any school program may be to increase instructional integration, the varying policy environments schools find themselves in contributes to differences in how schools design and implement their Title I schoolwide programs.

Recent changes in state and district policies have consequences for how Title I schoolwide services are delivered. The most visible of these policies, probation, is likely to emphasize discrete aspects of a school's instructional program rather than viewing school improvement in a schoolwide manner. The two schools we visited both adopted strategies aimed at getting off probation as quickly as possible, and focused on improving student test scores. At the same time, district policies have consequences for schools not on probation, since schools must adapt to changing expectations.

While the findings on integrating standards into the curriculum are preliminary, they do suggest directions for future research. For one, teacher collaboration is a useful strategy for aligning the curriculum with the standards. Through collaboration, teachers are more likely to teach similar things in the same grade and be more aware of what is required in the next grade. Following the standards may also change the amount of material covered in a given period of time as well as the difficulty of that material. On the other hand, without adequate support for low achieving students, standards may

encourage teachers to teach different content to students who have mastered different standards.

Creating standards should not be viewed as a panacea. They have existed in one form or another in the Chicago schools for many years. The Chicago Learning Outcomes preceded the current standards, textbooks provide pacing schedules, and standardized testing establishes basic skills that students must know. Additionally, standards do not insure schools change how they are organized or how teachers teach. In the four schools we visited, existing structures and practices already in place were used to incorporate the standards. Where changes were made, these were in response to the school being on probation. This calls into question whether standards will accomplish the wide scale changes claimed by advocates.

As policymakers consider the future of Title I schoolwide funding, it is important to recognize that the policy environment local schools operate in influences how they design and implement schoolwide programs. The constraints and incentives of this broader policy environment is likely to affect new programs and policies as well as the ones already in place. Achieving greater policy coherence will probably achieve more than changing current policies.

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Table 1: Summary of Expected and Actual Achievement Scores for Students at Four Title I Schoolwide Projects, Academic Years 1990-91 to 1995-96, Chicago Public Schools

	Math			Reading		
School	Average	Expected	Residual	Average	Expected	Residual
Fairfax	27.84	16.94	10.93	15.99	14.61	1.37
Cornell	15.57	22.49	-6.89	11.87	20.27	-8.4
Montgomery	28.07	21.17	6.94	23.27	14.14	9.13
Butler	9.9	18.77	-8.85	11.69	16.87	-5.19

Source: William L. Yancey & Raj Thadani (1997). *Identifying Exceptional Schools: Chicago, Illinois.* Laboratory for Student Success, Center for Research on Human Development and Education, Temple University.

Table 2: Demographic and School Characteristics for Students at Four Title I Schoolwide Projects and the District, Chicago Public Schools, 1996-97.

	Fairfax	**Cornell**	**Montgomery**	**Butler**	**CPS**
Enrollment	441	667	956	494	409,499
% White	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	11.3
% Black	100	100.0	0.1	100.0	54.7
% Hispanic	0.0	0.0	99.0	0.0	30.6
% Asian	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	3.2
% Native American	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
% LEP	0.0	0.0	59.0	0.0	15.4
% Low Income	95.5	86.7	98.1	99.8	83.2
% Mobility	34.1	24.5	24.1	32.3	29.0
Year Schoolwide	1992	1994	1995	1992	

Source: Chicago Public Schools

Table 3: School budget, State Chapter 1, and Federal Title I Budget for four schools with Title I Schoolwide Projects, Chicago Public Schools, FY 1997-98.

School	School Budget	State Chapter 1	Federal Title I	Total Title I	% of Total Budget
Fairfax	$2,442,100	$318,960	$299,398	$ 618,358	25.3%
Cornell	$3,056,443	$414,000	$269,703	$ 683,703	22.4%
Montgomery	$4,790,140	$695,996	$338,803	$1,034,799	21.6%
Butler	$2,888,184	$337,680	$345,064	$ 682,744	23.6%

Source: School budget and *School Improvement Plan for Advancing Academic Achievement*, for each of the four schools, 1997.